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MARĀTIB AL-TAQWĀ: SA‘ĪD AL-DĪN FARGHĀNĪ ON THE ONTOLOGY OF ETHICS

William C. Chittick

Given the philosophical tradition’s explicit acknowledgment that “the Necessary in Existence” (*al-wājib al-wujūd*) is a proper designation for God per se, and given the fact that this acknowledgment came to be shared by various forms of Sufism and Kalam, it should come as no surprise that many scholars who investigated the reality of the human, “created upon the form of God,” concluded that ethical perfection amounted to the soul’s harmonious conformity with the Real Existence (*al-wujūd al-ḥaqq*).¹ Early on, philosophers tended to keep ontology separate from *‘ilm al-akhlāq*, the science of ethics, but they used expressions like *al-tashabbuh bi’l-ilāh*, “similarity to the God,” and *ta’alluh*, “deiformity,” to designate the state of human perfection. Achieving perfection demanded transformation of *khulq*, “character,” the singular of the word *akhlāq*, and books on philosophical ethics were full of implicit and explicit instructions on how to achieve balance among the diverse character traits found in the human soul. In Quranic usage, *khulq* can be understood as the invisible and internal configuration of human qualities, as contrasted with *khalq* or “creation,” the visible structure of the human. This is suggested, for example, by the Prophet’s prayer, “O God, just as You made my creation beautiful, so also make my character beautiful.” The various individual traits that make up a person’s character may then be termed ugly (*masāwi’ al-akhlāq*)

1. This is a typical designation for God by Ibn al-‘Arabī and his followers. As Avicenna says in *The Metaphysics of the Healing*, ed. and trans. Michael Marmura (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), 38–39 (my translation): “By its essence, the Necessary in Existence is the Real constantly, and the possible in existence is real through something else, but unreal [*bātil*] in itself. Hence everything other than the One Necessary in Existence is unreal in itself.”

or beautiful (*maḥāsin al-akhlāq*). Any discussion of ethics—i.e., character traits—has to address vice as well as virtue, and both of these are inevitably rooted in reality per se, which is to say that they go back to the Real Existence. As al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) often says in *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, “There is nothing in existence but God and His acts.”

Al-Ghazālī sometimes uses the phrase *al-takhalluq bi-akhlāq Allāh*, “characterization by the character traits of God,” to designate the ethical perfection that is achieved by actualizing the divine form. He devotes a good portion of his commentary on the divine names, *al-Maqṣad al-asnā*, to explaining how the soul needs to actualize a share (*ḥaẓẓ*) of each of the divine and human character traits that are designated by God’s names. For his part, Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) developed this way of explaining the roots of character in numerous contexts. If authors like Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) began to criticize the vision of things associated with Ibn al-ʿArabī’s name, stigmatizing it—in their minds—as “*waḥdat al-wujūd*,” this is because they understood it as something like what we would call pantheism. One of their arguments was precisely that Ibn al-ʿArabī and like-minded authors traced not only the beautiful but also the ugly and despicable back to God. They saw this as tantamount to nullifying the Shariah, for, if “All is He” (*hama ūst*), as Persian-speaking Sufis liked to put it, then all must be allowable.

Historians have generally recognized that Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 673/1274), Ibn al-ʿArabī’s stepson, was the most important conduit through which Ibn al-ʿArabī’s teachings were transmitted and given a certain systematic rigor. One of Qūnawī’s outstanding students was Saʿīd al-Dīn Farghānī (d. ca. 700/1300), author of the first commentary on the great *Poem of the Way* (*Naẓm al-sulūk*) by Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235). Qūnawī explains in a foreword to Farghānī’s book that he lectured in Persian on the poem to a group of scholars over a period of several years. Farghānī then rewrote the notes that he had taken during the lectures as *Mashāriḥ al-darārī*.² Later he translated the Persian text into Arabic with many modifications and additions, giving it the title *Muntahaʾl-madārik*.

Farghānī is also the author of two short Arabic treatises, *Taḥrīr al-bayān fī taqrīr shuʿab al-īmān wa-rutab al-iḥsān* and *Marātib al-taqwā*, both of which have often been ascribed to Ibn al-ʿArabī.³ When I first came across the two in the Süleymaniye Library in 1979, I assumed that they were by Qūnawī because of the style and content. My wife Sachiko Murata wrote out copies of both, and I collated them with several manuscripts, thinking that I would publish them, but events took me in other directions. Recently I brought them out from the bottom of a drawer and translated them into English. Having completed the translation of *Marātib*, I realized that it was especially relevant to the topic of Sufism and ethics. I continued to think that Qūnawī was the author, even though Richard Todd ascribed the two to Farghānī on the basis of a single manuscript.⁴ Then Stephen Hirtenstein of the Ibn Arabi Society kindly sent me another copy of *Taḥrīr*, which also ascribes it to Farghānī. When I looked closely at *Muntahaʾl-madārik*, I realized that several

2. Edited and published by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshṭiyānī (Mashhad: Chāpkhāna-yi Dānishgāh-i Mashhad, 1978).

3. For the first of these, see Chittick, “*Taḥrīr al-bayān*: Saʿīd al-Dīn Farghānī on the Psychology of *Dhikr*,” *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabī Society* 66 (2019): 1–32.

4. Richard Todd, *The Sufi Doctrine of Man: The Metaphysical Anthropology of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 185.

passages in *Tahrīr* covered the same ground with the same terminology, though in a manner that showed shared authorship rather than borrowing.

Both *Tahrīr al-bayān* and *Marātib al-taqwā* discuss ethics with a view toward the well-known tripartite division of the religion into submission (*islām*), faith (*īmān*), and beautiful-doing (*ihsān*). Farghānī devotes the last part of the introduction of *Muntahā'l-madārak* to the same topic, but *Tahrīr* and *Marātib* are complementary to that discussion rather than repetitive. In *Muntahā*, he summarizes the three levels in these terms:

First is to undertake the voyage [*sayr*] of turning away from the domiciles of the properties [*aḥkām*] of the soul's habits and from clinging to the search for the soul's passing, disappearing, natural and animal shares, appetites [*shahawāt*], and desires [*murādāt*]. The soul does this by clinging to the command and prohibition in all of its movements and stillnesses, in both word and deed. This is to undertake the voyage connected to the station of submission.

Second is for the soul in respect of its inward [*bāṭin*] to enter into exile [*ghurba*] by cutting off from its animal domicile, the station of its familiar appetites, and the homestead of its manifestation in the forms of its bodily and satanic manynesses [*katharāt*] and deviations [*inhirāfāt*]. The soul conjoins [*ittiṣāl*] with the presence [*ḥaḍra*] of its inward and the properties of its inward's balance [*adāla*] and oneness [*waḥda*], namely, the angelic and spiritual descriptions and character traits. This is connected to the level of faith.

Third is for the soul in respect of its secret core [*sirr*] to gain the witnessing [*mushāhada*] that attracts to *tawḥīd* itself by way of being annihilated [*fanā'*] from the properties of the veils and bonds that overcame it when it descended and became clothed by the levels [of existence]. It is to shake off the dust of the traces of its createdness [*khalqīyya*] from the skirt of its realness [*ḥaqqīyya*]. This is connected to the station of beautiful-doing.⁵

Farghānī makes frequent reference to the ascending levels of self that are mentioned in this passage, namely, soul, spirit, and secret core (*sirr*), terms that had been discussed for centuries. At one place in *Muntahā*, he specifies that they are the animal soul (*al-naḥs al-ḥayawāniyya*), the spiritual spirit (*al-rūḥ al-rūḥāniyya*),⁶ and the existential secret (*al-sirr al-wujūdī*), the third of which he also calls “the inward of the spirit” (*bāṭin-i rūḥ*).⁷ He correlates the three levels with the religion's three dimensions as follows:

5. *Muntahā'l-madārīk*, ed. ʿĀsim Ibrāhīm al-Kayyālī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2007), 1:126. Farghānī's discussion of the subsections of these three levels continues to p. 143. The Kayyālī edition, like the edition by Wisām al-Khaṭāwī (vol. 1; Qum: Kitābsarā-yi Ishraq, 2007), simply transcribes the 1876 Bulaq edition along with most of its errors and some new ones. One should consult the excellent Süleymaniye manuscripts, such as Carullah 1107 (copied in 741) and Ragıp Paşa 670 (copied in 763).

6. *Muntahā*, 1:124. The repeated use of the term *al-rūḥ al-rūḥāniyya* in *Muntahā'l-madārīk*, *Tahrīr al-bayān*, and *Marātib al-taqwā* is one piece of evidence that helped convince me of Farghānī's authorship of all three works. The expression is not found in the *Futūḥāt* or in the writings of Qūnawī, nor does Farghānī use the Persian equivalent in *Mashāriq al-darārī*.

7. This is what Qūnawī calls *al-sirr al-ilāhī*, which, he says, is “the self-disclosure of the specific face” (*tajallī al-wajh al-khāṣṣ*); see *Miftāḥ al-ghayb*, ed. Muḥammad Khwājawī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mawlā, 1995), 109. The specific face, in turn, is the innermost of the five faces of the heart (each face corresponding to one of the Five Divine Presences). The specific face gazes upon God's knowledge of its own reality. See Qūnawī, *Iʿjāz al-bayān* (Hyderabad-Deccan: Osmania Oriental Publications Bureau, 1949), 240. According to Ibn al-ʿArabī, the specific face is God's face turned toward a thing in order to give it existence, which may be why Farghānī calls it the “existential” face. For Ibn al-ʿArabī's explication of its role, see Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al-ʿArabī's Cosmology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 134–54.

Each has a configuration [*nash'a*] specific to it. The configuration of the soul is sensory [*hissiyya*] and witnessed [*shahādiyya*]; its property is specific to the level of submission. The configuration of the spirit is unseen [*ghaybiyya*], ascribed,⁸ and pertaining to being [*kawniyya*]; its property is specific to the inward and secret of faith. The configuration of the secret core is unseen, true [*ḥaqīqiyya*], and real [*ḥaqiqiyya*]; its property is beautiful-doing.⁹

Farghānī structures *Tahrīr al-bayan* as a commentary on a Hadith that says faith has seventy-some branches. He speaks in detail about the difference between *islām* and *īmān*, but he pays relatively little attention to *ihsān*. In *Marātib al-taqwā*, he continues the discussion of the three levels, but he focuses on the beautiful-doing that is the goal of both submission and faith. He presents the text as a commentary on the Quranic verse about *taqwā* that he quotes at the outset. I translate *taqwā* as “godwariness” when it is a noun and as “to be wary” as a verb. The verb takes three objects in the Quran, namely, God, the Lord, and the Fire. Quran translators have rendered the word in a variety of ways, most of which pay little regard to the literal meaning.

In *Muntahā'l-madārik*, Farghānī discusses *taqwā* twice. In the body of the commentary, he explains its meaning while explicating a verse that mentions two derivatives from the same root: “I oppose the first [the blamer] in his blame out of godwariness [*tuqā*], just as I agree with the second [the slanderer] in his malice out of protectiveness [*taqiyya*].”¹⁰ Farghānī explains that both *tuqā* and *taqiyya* derive from the word *wiqāya*, “protection,” which means “to preserve a thing from that which harms and diminishes it.” He writes,

Taqwā is to put the soul under the protection of the Shariah, or of everything that preserves it from settling down in the two worlds. *Tuqā* means the same. God's words, *Be wary of God* [5:35] mean: Make obeying Him and avoiding disobedience toward Him your own protection against the trace of His wrath and punishment. Or, make your souls His protection by ascribing blameworthy things to them and not to Him, even though all of them are His acts.

As for *taqiyya*, it is a word used by some Shiis to refer to ‘Alī because they suppose that he did not manifest opposition to the rightly guided caliphs before him because of protectiveness, that is, he made his agreement with them a protection against the appearance of trial [*fitna*] among the people, defect in their religion, and the enemies' gaining mastery over the egg of the submission [*bayḍat al-islām*].¹¹

Farghānī then offers a detailed explanation of the meaning of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's verse. He says that *tuqā* refers to the station of godwariness, which is “to avoid all deviated

8. As Farghānī mentions later on, the spirit is called “ascribed” (*idāfi*) because it is ascribed to God with the pronoun “My” in the Quranic verse, *I blew into him [Adam] of My spirit* (15:29).

9. *Muntahā*, 1:130.

10. Th. Emil Homerin translates the verse like this: “I break with the first and his blame / out of righteousness / while tactfully I appear to bond / with the second, low-born and mean.” *Umar Ibn al-Fāriḍ: Sufi Verse, Sainly Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 2001), verse 52.

11. *Muntahā*, 1:207–208. By calling submission an “egg,” Farghānī is pointing out that it achieves its purpose only by hatching as *īmān* and *ihsān*. Otherwise, it is simply a potentiality.

properties in belief, word, act, and state; and to make the Beloved and attentiveness [*tawajjuh*] toward Him protection against letting those deviated properties dominate over the soul.”¹² Protectiveness then means to make conformity (*muwāfaqa*) and the lack of any show of opposition (*mukhālafa*) a protection against the trial that would occur if people were to believe in indwelling (*ḥulūl*) and embodiment (*tajsim*), ideas that they are apt to have when they do not have a proper understanding of *tawḥīd*.¹³

Farghānī’s other discussion of *taqwā* comes in the introduction while explaining the significance of the divine names. After quoting the Hadith that says that God has ninety-nine names and that “Whoever enumerates them will enter the Garden,” he says that enumeration (*iḥṣāʾ*) has three ascending levels: connection (*taʿalluq*), characterization (*takhalluq*), and realization (*tahaqquq*). These are the same three levels that provide the organizing scheme of Ibn al-ʿArabī’s short commentary on the divine names called *Kashf al-maʿnā ʿan sirr asmāʾ Allāh al-ḥusnā*. Farghānī links “connection” with the animal soul and “characterization” with the spiritual spirit. As for “realization,” he says, “It comes about through *taqwā* and casting off [*inkhilāʿ*] all forms, meanings, and traces that are marked with the stamp of new arrival [*ḥudūth*] and that abide and become manifest in someone; and through his being concealed [*istitār*] by the glories [*subḥāt*] of the entities, secrets, and lights of the names.”¹⁴ In simplistic terms, this is to say that *taqwā* can be understood as the realization of the stations of *fanāʾ* and *baqāʾ*, annihilation and subsistence.

In *Marātib al-taqwā*, Farghānī clarifies the manner in which all character traits, whether beautiful or ugly, are rooted in the names of the Real Existence, a discussion he also undertakes in many other places in his writings. Like Ibn al-ʿArabī, he does not refrain from giving credit where credit is due, which is to say that he acknowledges that God is both the Guide (*hādī*) and the Misguider (*muḍill*). In the following paragraph, for example, he is explaining the meaning of these two lines in Ibn al-Fāriḍ’s poem:

Nothing is vain, nor are the creatures a futile creation,
even if their actions fail to hit the mark.
Their affairs flow with the features of the names
driven to their properties by the wisdom of the Essence’s description.¹⁵

Surely the realness [*ḥaqqiyya*] that accompanies existence itself [*ʿayn al-wujūd*] is nondelimited [*muṭlaq*]. It pervades all the divine names and their requisites. This is because every divine name—like the Guide and the Misguider, the Ever-Merciful [*raḥīm*] and the Severe [*qahhār*—is nothing other than the Real Existence, but in respect of a description ascribed to the Divine Presence, like guidance and misguidance, mercy and severity, exalting [*iʿzāz*] and abasing [*idhlāl*]. For, just as He ascribes the description of guidance to that Presence with His words, *And God guides whomever He wants to a straight path* [2:213, 24:46], so also He ascribes misguidance to It with His words, *And God misguides the wrongdoers* [14:27].¹⁶

12. *Muntahā*, 1:208.

13. *Muntahā*, 1:209.

14. *Muntahā*, 1:48.

15. My translation. For Homerin’s translation, see ‘Umar Ibn al-Fāriḍ, verses 744–45.

16. *Muntahā*, 2:287.

All reality is strictly determined by the names, which designate the universal attributes governing the beginningless knowledge of the Real Existence. Nothing can be anything other than what it is *sub specie aeternitatis*. Nonetheless, once the manifestation of ontological perfections in the created realm is taken into account, free choice and human responsibility have major roles to play, so the moral obligation to conform to divine guidance remains. Farghānī makes this eminently clear not only in *Marātīb al-taqwā* but also in his other works. From his standpoint, it would be absurd to suggest that *waḥdat al-wujūd*—a term that he was the first to use in something like a technical sense¹⁷—demands indifference to ethics and the Shariah.

The translation here is based on the collation of four manuscripts from the Süleymaniye Library (Şehid Ali Paşa 1340/3, Carullah 1001/3, Halet Efendi İlavesi 66/7, Feyzullah 2163), supplemented by one manuscript from the Berlin State Library (Or. Oct. 2460). There are no discrepancies in the manuscripts that would have an effect on the translation, though three of them (Şehid Ali Paşa, Carullah, and Berlin) are missing the last “Section” and also share a few dropped phrases and sentences.

The Levels of Godwariness

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful

The praise belongs to God, who singled out those sincere in praising and lauding Him and those specified for His proximity and friendship for the realization of the realities of guidance and godwariness; who made them climb the roads of the religion on the ladders of certainty from the nadir of the precincts of distance and from the brink of destruction and annihilation to the zenith of the presences of love, proximity, and subsistence; and who accepted and welcomed them with the most generous welcome and the most beautiful acceptance by bestowing the descriptions of His mercy and the varieties of His generosity.

I bear witness that there is no god but God alone, without associate. This is the bearing witness of one upon whom have been cast words from his Lord, so he understood and accepted. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. He was created as the beloved, gazed upon as the goal and the sought, and made known by witnessing and encounter. He is the elected and chosen whom He carried in ascent to the station of *Or Closer* [53:9], which is the most eminent ascent and the highest climb.¹⁸ God bless him and his household and companions, those ennobled by the nobility of limpidness, loyalty, godwariness, and purity, and give them abundant peace!

17. On Farghānī's technical use of the term, see Chittick, “A History of the Term *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*,” in Chittick, *In Search of the Lost Heart: Explorations in Islamic Thought*, ed. Mohammed Rustom, Atif Khalil, and Kazuyo Murata (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 79–80. This chapter, and the one following it, are derived from an earlier article which can be found at <http://www.williamcchittick.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Rumi-and-Wahdat-al-Wujud.pdf>.

18. Farghānī discusses “*Or closer*” as a Quranic designation for the unique perfection achieved by the Prophet in *Tahrīr* (see Chittick, “*Tahrīr al-bayān*,” 12, 22, 29) as well as in his longer works.

Now to begin: This is what the moment [*waqt*] and state [*hāl*] generously gave and presented to thought [*khāṭir*] and mind [*bāl*] concerning the meaning of “godwariness” and “the means of approach” [*wasīla*] along with their degrees, the eminent secrets of their origins and final ends, the clarification of how they are arranged in the struggle on the road to the Presence of the He-ness [*ḥaḍrat al-huwiyya*], and the mention of how a formula of hopefulness [*tarajji*]¹⁹ follows as their consequence. And from God aid is sought in manifesting truthfulness and coinciding with the Real in the pen’s flow and speech’s explanation. And He is an excellent patron, an excellent helper [8:40].

God says, *O you who have faith, be wary of God, and seek the means of approach to Him, and struggle in His road. Perhaps you will prosper* [5:35].

You should know that we have spoken at length in clarifying the levels of faith, its inward and its outward, the root of its tree, its branches, and its taproots in our book designated as *Drafting the Clarification: Establishing the Branches of Faith and the Levels of Beautiful-Doing*. So let us explain in this book the levels of godwariness, the ways of seeking the means of approach, and the struggle consequent upon that. We say, seeking help from God in introducing what we have undertaken, that three introductions will help in the understanding of what will come after this, God willing.

The First Introduction. Know that despite the manyness of their entifications [*taʿayyūnāt*],²⁰ all of the most beautiful divine names are comprehended [*jamʿ*] by two names, the name God²¹ and the name *All-Merciful*.

As for the name *God*, it comprehends all of them in two respects. One is in respect of the Essence; or, call it “the Existence,” for His Existence—high indeed is He!—is identical with His Essence. It is not an attribute or a description added to the Essence.

The second is in respect of the affirmed levels, which comprehend all attributes of both the Real and creation, attributes of both perfection and deficiency. These are like knowledge, life, desire, and power; contraction and expansion, guidance and misguidance, benefit and harm, unneediness [*ghināʿ*], mercy [*rahma*], approval [*riḍā*], and so on; and also like anger [*sakhat*], obstinacy [*lajājā*], wrath [*ghaḍab*], derision [*sukhriyya*], deception [*makr*], guile [*khidāʿ*], and their like.

19. The reference is to the last sentence of the verse in question, i.e., *Perhaps you will prosper*.

20. Entification (*taʿayyūn*) means to be or become an entity (*ʿayn*), that is, a specific thing as distinct from other specific things. Ibn al-ʿArabī uses the term on occasion but pays no special attention to it. Qūnawī turns it into a technical term typical of this school of thought. He often talks of Non-Entification (*lā taʿayyūn*), which is the Essence or Sheer Existence. The first and second entifications are then descending levels of the Real’s self-disclosure. See, for example, my translation of his *Nuṣūṣ*, “The Texts: The Keys to the *Fuṣūṣ*,” 3, which can be found at http://www.williamcchittick.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Sadr_al-Din_Qunawi_The_Texts_al-Nusus.pdf.

21. Farḡānī suggests one of many reasons why the word *Allāh* should be translated rather than reproduced in English as if it were a proper name: “The reality of the name *Allāh* is simply the self-disclosure and entification of the Essence in the respect that It is one while comprehending all the self-disclosures and entifications that stand through the Essence. This vocable is an Arabic word whose meaning is identical with the meaning of the word *khudāy* in Persian and the word *tangari* in Turkish” (*Muntahā*, 1:44).

The “level” [*martaba*] is that which affirms the relation and tie between the Lord [*rabb*] and the vassal [*marbūb*], the Creator and the created. So the name God is identical with the Essence and Existence in respect of the level, which is the Divinity [*ulūha*]. This can also be called “the Essential Knowledge” connected to all known things, both the necessary among them and the possible. For in respect of the Essence’s nondelimitation [*itlāq*] and inasmuch as It is It, no property [*ḥukm*] whatsoever is given to It, nor is anything whatsoever related [*irtibāṭ*] or ascribed [*intisāb*] to It. Rather, properties are given to It and things are related and ascribed to It only in respect of Its entification, level, and attributes.²²

As for the name *All-Merciful* [*rahīmān*], it comprehends the names in respect of Existence Itself, nothing else. But, this is in respect of Its receptivity [*qābiliyya*] to the entifications in keeping with the attributes, like the names Knowing, Alive, Desiring, and Powerful, for each of these is a name of Existence, but in respect of Its entification by the attribute of knowledge, life, desire, and power. So the All-Merciful is a name of the Real inasmuch as It is Sheer Existence, for it is an intensive mode derived from the mercy that embraces everything, and nothing but Existence with Its entifications embraces everything. Hence it is a name of Existence in the respect that It is entified by and utterly inclusive of all entifications and inasmuch as all of Its entifications are related to It equally, for It is entified by guidance and misguidance, pardon and gentleness, vengeance and severity, hiding and manifesting, unveiling and curtaining.

As for the name *Ever-Merciful* [*rahīm*], it also is a name of Existence and is derived from this all-embracing, all-inclusive mercy, but in respect of the inclination of Existence Itself away from Its nondelimitation [*itlāq*]*—in which the relation of guidance and misguidance, unveiling and curtaining, are equal—toward Its entification in respect of guidance, luminosity, and unveiling; and also Its inclination toward giving predominance to the property of the attributes of gentleness [luṭf] over the properties of the attributes of severity [qahr] that are their opposites, by virtue of I shall write [mercy] for those who are godwary and give the alms-tax [7:156]. Existence inclines toward ever-mercifulness through Its entification in respect of guidance, unveiling, gentleness, and clemency, so It has a kind of exaggeration in making the property of these attributes general for all those who are the objects of Its mercy in the varieties of their fluctuations in states. Know this! You will be rightly guided, if God alone wills.*

The Second Introduction. Know that the existent things are related to the One Real Existence only in respect of Its entifications, which are Its names. So every existent thing is related to one of the names in as much as the existential portion [*al-ḥiṣṣat al-wujūdiyya*] effused [*mufāḍa*] on the reality of that existent thing, ascribed to it, and bringing it into existence becomes entified only from the Presence of one of the divine names. In the second instant [*ān*], the assistance that reaches it and through which it subsists reaches it only by means of that name. And its return [*rujūʿ*] is only to that name. Yes, and it will see—if that is ordained for it—nothing but it in the next world. So this name is its Lord [*rabb*] in reality.²³

22. For some of Qūnawī’s remarks on the distinction between the Essence and the Divinity, see “The Texts,” 27.

23. For a similar explanation of Lord, see *Muntahā*, 1:40.

But, the Lord of the possessors of resoluteness [*ulu'l-ʿazm*] among the messengers and of the perfect among the friends [*awliyāʾ*] is only the outward [*zāhir*] of the name *God*, and the Lord of our most perfect prophet is the inward [*bāṭin*] of the name *God*. The name *God* is the Lord of all existent things in respect of its all-comprehensiveness [*jamʿiyya*], but its lordhood is ascribed to those other than the perfect in respect of and by the intermediary of its names; and [it is ascribed] to the perfect by the name *God* itself, not by the intermediary of any other, particular name. Hence His words, *Faces that day will be radiant, gazing upon their Lord* [75:22–23] alludes to the fact that everyone will see the Real in respect of the name that is his Lord. The levels of the companions of vision—namely, the pulpits, chairs, and dunes of musk—alludes to this.²⁴ So understand!

Each of the names has a specific sort of trace [*athar*] in the vassal [*marbūb*]. For example, the trace of the Knowing in its vassal is inclination [*mayl*] toward various kinds of sciences and artisanries. The trace of the Desiring is inclination toward expectations and wishes of many sorts. The trace of the Powerful is various sorts of displaying traces [*taʿthīr*] and the like.

So the attribution of godwariness to “God” [in the Quran] goes back to every sort of trace. Its attribution to the “Lord” goes back to the traces specific to this name. As for the “Fire,” this goes back to the realization of the reality of faith, sincerity in deeds, and the elimination from the servant of the open and hidden traces of unbelief and hypocrisy that result in the Fire.

The Third Introduction. Know that just as God described Himself in His exalted book with the description of guidance, approval, gentleness, beneficence, bringing near, and benefit, so also He described Himself with misguidance, anger, severity, chastisement, and vengeance. Each of these descriptions has a specific trace and designated result that appears in the soul of the servant in keeping with a state that is dominated either by the property of oneness, all-comprehensiveness, and balance between the property of the spiritual trace and the animal, natural, elemental spirit; or a state that inclines and deviates from this oneness and all-comprehensiveness toward the animal, natural, elemental spirit and its properties. In the first state the traces of the description of guidance, approval, and their like appear in the soul. In the second state, the traces of the description of misguidance, anger, and similar things appear in it. So know this! You will be rightly guided, God willing.

Section. Know then, after keeping these three introductions in mind, that literally godwariness—*taqwā*, *tuqāh*, and *tuqā*—consists of making one thing the protection [*wiqāya*] of something else so as to preserve the latter from blights, traces, and characteristics that are opposed to it. In the Shariah, the word is used for leaving aside and guarding against forbidden things, doubtful things, and all forms of deviation in word and deed. The manner in which the literal meaning corresponds with Shariʿite usage is that guarding against forbidden, doubtful,

24. Reference to various places from which people will gaze upon God in paradise. Ibn al-ʿArabī offers a diagram with detailed explanation in *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* (Cairo, 1911), 3:428, 442–443.

and deviated things is the cause that necessitates the soul's coming under the protection of God's approval. This protects it and guards it from joining with the traces of God's anger. So the Shari'ite use takes into account the cause, and the literal meaning takes into account the effect.

The explanation of this is that the human soul, which is described as being *inspired in its depravity and godwariness* [91:8], is a guise [*hay'a*] that combines the animal spirit and the human trace and substance. The reality of the animal spirit is a foggy vapor arising from the inward of the formal, pineal heart, which is configured from the elemental nature that appears in the form of nourishment in the bodily constitution. The nourishment is altered in the stomach, and then in the liver, into the form of a subtle blood that reaches the heart by the intermediary of the tie that connects the liver to the inward and cavity of the pineal heart. From this subtle blood, which is strongly dominated by and filled with the quality of heat, there arises a vapor in the cavity of the heart.

This vapor's correspondence with subtlety and heat carries the trace of the light of life [*nūr al-hayāt*]. It is named an "animal" [*ḥayawān*] spirit because of [the life] it carries. Thereby the proportioning [*taswiya*] of the human body's constitution [*mizāj*] is completed. Then God configures within the constitution another configuration by the inblowing [*nafkh*] of the trace of the spiritual spirit, whose entification is fixed in the World of the Spirits within the Guarded Tablet, which is the Ascribed Spirit [*al-rūḥ al-idāfi*] meant by His words, *of My spirit* [15:29]. The "trace" is the governing gaze [*al-naẓar al-tadbīrī*] from the Spirit, and it is the human substance [*al-jawhar al-insānī*]. So the light of life is a mirror that is polished because of this trace, gaze, and substance. Thereby it keeps apart from the animal, elemental spirit and it becomes substantiated and separate from the spirits of all other animals.²⁵

The "inspired soul" [*al-nafs al-mulhama*] consists of this combinational, equilibrrious guise [*al-hay'a al-ijtimā'iyya al-i'tidāliyya*]. The entering place for the inspiration of *its depravity*—which is manifestation in the form of deviations and things deemed ugly by the intellect and the Shariah and inclination toward letting the soul loose in appetites, some of which are forbidden and others of which are dubious [*mushtabaha*]²⁶—is only its animal spirit. This is because the soul inclines and deviates away from its combinational, equilibrrious guise toward one of its sides, namely, the animal, natural, elemental spirit, for the characteristic of the animal, natural, elemental spirit is only to become engrossed [*inhimāk*] in the appetites in keeping with its root, which is elemental nature, since one of its characteristics is letting itself loose in manifestation with the description of manyness, whether this is deviated [*munḥarif*] or equilibrrious [*mu'tadil*].

The starting point for the inspiration of *its godwariness* is nothing but the intermediateness [*wasā'iyya*] of the equilibrrious guise and the human substance, for these two protect the soul through the manifestation of unitary, equilibrrious traces, which are some of the traces of God's approval. They shield it from the

25. For a similar discussion of the configuration of the human soul, see *Muntahā*, 1:124.

manifestation of the traces of its natural, elemental deviations and their results, which are the traces of God's anger within it.

When you have recognized this, you should know that whatever becomes manifest in the soul and its locus of manifestation [*maẓhar*], which is the body—namely, the movements and stillnesses, the words and deeds, the guises and states, and all the attributes—is nothing but the traces of the divine names included in the name God. For example, its hearing is the trace of the name *Hearing*, its seeing is the trace of the name *Seeing*, its smelling is the trace of the name *Finder* [*wājid*], its tasting is the trace of the name *Provider*, its touching is the trace of the name *Alive*, its eating and drinking are the trace of the name *Nourisher*, its sleep is the trace of the name *Death-Giver*, its waking, moving, and striving are traces of the name *Upraiser* [*bā'ith*], its astuteness, presence, and regaining consciousness [*ifāqa*] are traces of the name *Witness*; its heedlessness, forgetfulness, and absence through swooning [*ighmā'*], madness, and intoxication are traces of the name *Curtainer* [*sattār*]; its pains and illnesses are traces of the name *Harmer* [*dārr*], its health and comfort are traces of the name *Benefiter* [*nāfi'*], and so on. Gauge in a similar way all the outward and inward attributes and seek by correspondence [*munāsaba*] the names of which they are the traces. Then ascribe the traces to the names.

Thus has been opened to you a door of recognition [*ma'rifa*]. For “He who recognizes his soul” in this way—constantly and moment by moment, not empty for one instant of the traces of the names of his Lord, displaying His traces within himself—“will have recognized his Lord” as constantly active and leaving traces within him. He will recognize the secret of God's withness [*ma'iyya*] through pervasion [*sarāya*] by the traces of His names. He will recognize the secret of the non-cessation of His assistance through existence, both with intermediary and without intermediary, for if it were to cease coming from Him for one instant, he would join with nonexistence. And other things as well.

Now let us come back and say: You have come to know that the inspired soul is the locus of manifestation and theatre [*minaṣṣa*] for the manifestation of the traces of God's most beautiful names, constantly and without cease, and that it is a combinational guise bringing the animal, natural, elemental spirit together with the human substance, the spiritual trace, and the governing gaze. Sometimes the trace of the animal, natural, elemental spirit dominates over it so that it becomes “the soul commanding to ugliness” [*al-naḥs al-ammāra bi'l-sū'*]. Sometimes the spiritual, unitary trace dominates, so it becomes “serene” [*muṭma'inna*]. Sometimes the trace of all-comprehensiveness dominates, so it becomes “blaming” [*lawwāma*].²⁶

Know then that when the soul deviates from its all-comprehensive guise and inclines toward the side of the animal, natural, elemental spirit, the traces of the divine names within it will accord with the description of its deviation. Their results and fruits within it will be colored by the property of the deviation that necessitates the manifestation of the trace of God's misguidance, wrath, anger, severity, harm, and vengeance within it. In this world and in the next, the traces of all these names

26. Farghānī explains these three levels in some detail in *Taḥrīr al-bayān*. See Chittick, “*Taḥrīr al-bayān*,” 8.

manifest within it will become manifest in forms disagreeable to the soul—pains or chastisement, illness, punishment, distance, and the veil. So its movements and stillnesses will not be straight; its sleep will not result in truthful, goodly dreams; its food and drink will not give ease and assistance in worship; and its children will not be configured as wholesome in existence, for the property of deviation will have been manifest and dominant over it in the state of insemination. Gauge all traces in a similar way. God is rightly-guiding.

In the state of the soul's equilibrium, or of the dominance of the spiritual trace over it, the traces of the names will become manifest within it only in the description of the oneness and balance that necessitate the manifestation of the trace of God's approval, guidance, gentleness, and benefit within it. The results and fruits within it will be colored by the property of these gentle attributes, which will become manifest in this world and the next in agreeable forms, such as ease, health, blessing, proximity, and unveiling. All the traces of the names will become manifest as agreeable to the soul, in contrast to what we mentioned concerning the domination of the property of deviation over it. God is the guide.

Faith is a divine light that may arrive at the inward of this soulish, combinational guise—which is the true [*ḥaqīqī*], meaning-related [*maʿnawī*] heart, not the formal [*ṣūrī*]¹—and at its outward, which is the inspired soul. When it becomes established in the heart and the soul, they become receptacles, first for faith and submission, and second for the Real's rulings, His Shariah, and His command and prohibition. They turn toward receiving them and acting in keeping with their requirements, which are performance of the incumbent and recommended acts and leaving aside and guarding against forbidden things [*muḥarramāt*], doubtful things [*shubuhāt*], and deviations.

The sensory configuration of this world, however, demands—at times in relation to some, and at most times in relation to others—that the soul incline and deviate from its combinational guise to the side of the animal, natural, elemental spirit along with heedlessness and absence from that turning and receiving. So the traces of the divine names will become manifest within it in the description of deviation; they will demand the manifestation of their results within it in the deviated description that necessitates pain and distance. Hence the trace of God's solicitude toward His faithful servants demands that He awaken them from the sleep of heedlessness and address them with His words—exalted and majestic is the speaker!—*O you who have faith, be wary of God!* [3:102]. This means, and God knows better [what it means]:

Once you have been guided to faith in God, His messenger, His angels, His books, the Last Day, and the measuring out, both the good of it and the evil of it, you should be on guard with your godwariness—by means of following God's command and prohibition and being present with them and with their requirements, which are performance of the incumbent and recommended acts, and leaving aside the forbidden, doubtful, and deviated things—against the soul's inclination and deviation from its oneness and all-comprehensiveness toward the side of the manyness of its animal, natural, elemental spirit, lest the deviations dominate over you.

Being on guard like this, place your souls under the protection of the oneness of God's command, the property of His prohibition, and being present with the mentioned requirements of these two; and under the protection of the oneness of your souls' spiritual trace and the balance of their all-comprehensiveness. Then the traces of God's names will be colored in your souls with the color of the oneness and equilibrium that require God's approval and proximity. This property, oneness, balance, proximity, and approval will protect you from the manifestation within you of the traces of God's anger, which is one of the results of the traces of God's names that are colored by the properties of your souls' deviation and their inclination away from the spiritual trace, from the balance of all-comprehensiveness, and from presence with the command and prohibition and acting in keeping with their requirements, [while they incline] toward the manyness of the animal, natural, elemental spirit and domination by heedlessness of the command and prohibition and what these require for them.

When you enter under this protection and take shelter in it, the complete trace of the name *Security-Giver* [*al-mu'min*] will reach you and He will give you security from the domination of the evils of your souls, from which the Prophet sought refuge with his words, "We seek refuge in God from the evils of our souls."²⁷ At this point you will gain the preparedness for voyaging [*sayr*], wayfaring [*sulūk*], and advancing [*taraqqī*] from the level of faith to the level of beautiful-doing. In this state you will be addressed with seeking *the means of approach* by means of performing the inward rightful dues [*huqūq*] connected with indifferent acts [*mubāḥāt*], both those that are to be done and those that are to be left aside. Thereby you will be seeking arrival at the station of beautiful-doing and its realization after performing the rightful dues of the incumbent and recommended things and leaving aside the forbidden, doubtful, and deviated things and entering under the protection of God's command and prohibition, seeking realization of the reality of the station of faith. So seeking *the means of approach* is identical with seeking nearness to God by means of supererogatory works [*nawāfil*] until God loves him such that He is his hearing, his seeing, his tongue, his hand, and his foot.²⁸ This is entrance into the circle of the station of beautiful-doing. God is rightly-guiding.

Completion. There remain secrets of godwariness and its levels that we will draft, and then we will be free to establish *the means of approach*, God willing.

We say: Know—God confirm you with sound understanding!—that in His Exalted Book God arranged godwariness according to three levels that are the levels of the journey to the place of return to God. These are submission, faith, and beautiful-doing. This is in His words—exalted is He who said them—*There is no fault in those who have faith and do wholesome deeds in what they eat, if they are godwary, have faith,*

27. This is part of a supplication taught by the Prophet and found in the standard Hadith collections, and other sources. A typical version reads like this: "The praise belongs to God. We praise Him, seek help from Him, and ask forgiveness from Him. We seek refuge in God from the evils of our souls and from our ugly deeds. When God guides someone, no one will misguide him; and when God misguides someone, no one will guide him. I bear witness that there is no god but God, He alone, without associate, and that Muhammad is His servant and His messenger." The Hadith goes on to say that one should then recite three specific passages from the Quran that begin with *Be wary of God* (3:102, 4:1, 33:70–71).

28. Reference to the famous Hadith of *nawāfil*, parts of which Farghānī will quote later. The Hadith plays a major role in discussions of "union" with God, especially for Ibn al-ʿArabī and his followers.

and do wholesome deeds, and then are godwary and have faith, and then are godwary and do what is beautiful [5:93].

Then He made reaching proximity with Him through love—which is what brings the servant into proximity with his Lord by negating distinguishing properties from him—a consequence of the level of beautiful-doing with His words, *and God loves the beautiful-doers* right after His words, *and then are godwary and do what is beautiful*. This has also come in the midst of a divine Hadith, namely, his words narrating from his Lord: “The servant never ceases gaining proximity to Me through supererogatory works until I love him. Then when I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing through which he sees,” and so on.

What is eaten—that is, what sustains human life and subsistence—is of two sorts, formal and meaning-related. The formal is connected to the body, to which the properties of the station of submission are connected. The meaning-related is connected to man’s heart, spirit, and secret core, to which the properties of the levels of faith and beautiful-doing are connected.

The formal is of two sorts. One sort supports man’s subsistence in this world. This is the sensory nourishment that supports his body. The other sort supports his subsistence in the next world. It is performing the incumbent and recommended acts by the body’s acquiescence to the Shari’ite commands and prohibitions.

What is eaten by spirit and heart—the two of which connect the properties of the inward to faith—is remembrance, reflection [*fikr*], unveiling [*kashf*], and bringing the character traits into balance, or putting their deviated dispositions to use in ways that will beautify their ugliness, as designated by the Law-giver²⁹—God’s blessings be upon him!

What is eaten by the secret core—to which are connected the properties of the level of beautiful-doing—are like perfect attentiveness and the secret core’s constant companionship, witnessing, and presence with the remembrance of its witnessed object along with witnessing it.

It follows that in the station of submission, which is the outward of faith, godwariness is guarding against leaving aside the mandatory and recommended acts that support one’s subsistence in the next world; and also guarding against partaking of forbidden, doubtful, and deviated things through wrongdoing and non-Shari’ite things in the formal livelihoods and the nourishments that support one’s subsistence in this world; and making observance of God’s command and prohibition a protection that protects against the manifestation of the names that require severity, anger, and harm because of the inspired soul’s deviation from all-comprehensiveness and from the spiritual trace toward the side of the animal spirit and following its natural, elemental appetites, whether on purpose, or by negligence and heedlessness.

29. On the manner in which the Shariah turns ugly character traits into beautiful traits, see Ibn al-‘Arabi’s explanations cited in Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-‘Arabi’s Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 286–288.

In the station of the inward of faith and in keeping with it, godwariness comes only by guarding the heart and spirit against being negligent and heedless of remembrance and sound reflection [*fikr*] on the Real's blessings and benefits; especially guarding the spirit against inclination toward the two sides of excess [*ifrāt*] and falling short [*tafrīt*] in its character traits and [guarding it] against inclination away from what necessitates its curtaining and being veiled from its world and the wonders of the sciences, recognitions, and secrets therein. That which necessitates this is for it to turn away from being heedless of its own essence and world and from occupation with the properties of the world of composition.

By means of guarding like this, the heart and the spirit will enter under the protection of being characterized by the names of God that are *Watcher* [*raqīb*], *Guardian* [*ḥafīẓ*], *Witness* [*shāhid*], *Just* [*ʿadl*], and *Light*. This characterization will protect it from the manifestation within it of the traces of the names *Curtainer*, *Misguider*, *Severe*, *Abaser*, and *Harmer*, whose traces are negligence, heedlessness, the lack of presence, and reflection's occupation with what does not concern it,³⁰ namely, being's properties [*al-aḥkām al-kawniyya*], expectations, wishes, and inclination toward the two sides of excess and falling short in character traits.

As for godwariness in the station of beautiful-doing, it is for the secret core to guard against being present with its entification and being delimited by this entification and by the properties of the Real and creation; against ascribing its witnessing and its presence with its Lord to its entification, not to its Lord; against its seeing that witnessing and presence in respect of its entification and delimitation by it; and against making manifest anything of the states gained in that witnessing and presence. By means of immersion in his witnessing of his Lord and complete presence with Him, he makes these guardings a protection that protects him in that seeing from seeing others and otherness, nonrecognition [*tanakkur*], and veiling [*iḥtijāb*]. Thus one of the great ones sought refuge from this with his words, "We seek refuge in God from nonrecognition after recognition and from the veil after self-disclosure." So understand!

Know that "godwariness with the rightful due of godwariness"³¹ is only in the stations and states. It is established and fixed within them by performing their rightful dues, undertaking their preconditions and requisites, and guarding against defects in any of them or deviation from the customs of straightness [*istiḳāma*] within them. This is like realization of the realities of the station of submission, then realization of the realities of the station of faith and the stations that these two comprise, like repentance, renunciation, watchfulness, trust, delegation [*tafwīd*], approval, and their like; and then also the realization of the realities of the beginning of the station of beautiful-doing with which the journey to God is completed and finalized. As for the end of the station of beautiful-doing connected with the journey in God, godwariness with the rightful due of godwariness is connected with the realization of the universals of the outward and inward names as well as all-comprehensiveness.³²

30. Allusion to the Hadith, "One beauty of a man's submission is his leaving aside what does not concern him."

31. Reference to 3:102, *Be wary of God with His rightful due of wariness*.

32. For Farghānī's explanations of these two as well as the third and fourth journeys, see Chittick, "*Taḥrīr al-bayān*," 27–29.

As for godwariness in keeping with ability [*istiṭāʿa*] and its property—as expressed in His words, *Be wary of God as far as you are able* [64:16]—it is connected only with states that are the results of other states in the voyages to God and in God in every state that appears, except that this ability must result in the appearance of a state higher than it. The Imam Abu'l-Qāsim al-Junayd alluded to this when he said, “If a servant approaches God for seventy years and is heedless of Him for one hour, what escapes him will be greater than what he gained.” He spoke truthfully in this, for what escapes him will be the result of seventy years and an hour, but what he gained will be the result of seventy years alone. Seventy years and an hour are more than seventy years alone.

So it is known that every state results in another state more eminent than it because it includes the one before it. The manifestation of this result depends upon gaining the ability and preparedness for the manifestation of what comes after. Hence the property of *Be wary of God as much as you are able* never comes to an end in voyaging in God's particular names, which cannot be calculated or enumerated. So this ability is renewed until the last breath left for the voyager, for at every instant his voyage is renewed by his realization of a particular name, and this realization bestows upon him a preparedness and ability to realize another particular name, until his last breath. In each renewal of a state, he is addressed by godwariness in performing the rightful dues of that state. Hence the property of *Be wary of God as much as you are able* will never come to an end. Godwariness within it is guarding against the thought of making it manifest to others or ascribing it to oneself by reason of the soul's stealing something of it. God is rightly guiding.

Section. Now you have come to know that faith is a light arriving in the heart and soul and receptive to everything that arrives from the Real, namely, the lights of command and prohibition, which bring about proximity to God, eliminate the darkness of elemental nature, and make manifest the road of proximity to Him—high indeed and holy is He! You have also come to know that godwariness is wayfaring in that road and gaining proximity to Him by undertaking [*irtikāb*] the commands and performing [*adāʾ*] the incumbent and recommended acts that they require; and by desisting [*intihāʾ*] from the prohibitions and leaving aside [*tark*] the forbidden, doubtful, and deviated things that are among what they require. By means of this undertaking and desisting, it is to enter under the protection of God's approval, guidance, benefit, and gentleness, a protection that protects the submitting, faithful person from the manifestation within him of the traces of God's anger, misguidance, severity, and harm.

Know now that the indifferent things and gaining proximity to God by means of them were passed over in silence when the property of godwariness was mentioned. Hence the Real called His servants' attention to them and commanded them to gain proximity to Him by bringing forth the indifferent things and by employing them or leaving them aside with intentions pure [*khālīṣ*] of the stains of this-worldly and next-worldly shares of the soul. All of this follows after His commanding them to seek proximity to Him by performing the mandatory and recommended acts

in order to observe His command and by leaving aside and guarding against the forbidden, doubtful, and deviated things in order to observe His prohibition. This is in His words, *Be wary of God, and seek the means of approach to Him* [5:35]. Hence the property of seeking the means of approach to Him includes performing the mandatory and recommended acts and leaving aside the forbidden, doubtful, and deviated things in word, deed, character, and state. Bringing the indifferent things or avoiding them is linked to an intention purified [*mukhallāṣ*] of the stains [*shawā'ib*] of the soul's shares in this world and the next world. "To Him" in the verse alludes to this purification/sincerity [*ikhhlās*], except that the property of seeking the means of approach by bringing the indifferent things is more specific, for what is understood from it is not designated by the command to godwariness.

Then know that seeking the means of approach is to eat and drink, or to leave these two aside, for the sake of God, not for the sake of the soul's desire and appetite, nor to follow the soul's thought to do that indifferent thing and partake of it or to leave it aside. In the same way one does not partake of any of the indifferent things or leave them aside except with the intention of proximity to God, for every indifferent thing is a blessing [*ni'ma*] from God and the organ [*āla*] with which one partakes of that blessing is also a blessing from Him. So also the power to leave it aside is a blessing from Him. Thus no one should partake of or leave aside any indifferent thing, or say or do any of this, or leave aside thoughts of saying or doing, except with the intention of showing gratitude for God's blessings, not for the sake of the soul's appetite or following its thought and desire. This should not make one heedless of remembering God or of showing gratitude for His blessings. For, when the voyager is assiduous [*mujidd*] and sincere [*mukhlis*], then immersion [*istighrāq*] in the remembrance of God and in the requirement to show gratitude for His blessings in every state and every time of bringing or leaving aside the indifferent will divert him from remembering food and drink and other things and from the thought of them. Thus it has been narrated from Ruwaym that he said, "For twenty years no thought whatsoever of food and drink has entered my mind, nor of partaking of them or leaving them aside."

When someone is constant in this, then his indifferent words and deeds and his partaking of or leaving aside all goodly [*ṭayyib*], longed-for [*marghūb*], indifferent things will be counted as supererogatory deeds and worshipful acts and will be joined with performing the incumbent and recommended acts and with leaving aside the forbidden, doubtful, and deviated things. This is because all of this will come by the intermediary of presence [*ḥuḍūr*] and pure intention, purified of the stains of the soul's shares, appetites, and thoughts; it will bring proximity to God and eliminate the properties of the distinctions [*imtiyāzāt*] between him and his Lord. This is because the soul—through its entification and resulting delimitation, its egoity through its shares, thoughts, appetites, and desires; and its gratification [*istifā'*] of these in respect of the fact that they are the soul's appetites and desires—is the [sum total of the] properties of distinction between the servant and his Lord. So, when the soul's appetite, share, and desire withdraw, and when one seeks the soul's enjoyment by bringing and partaking of the indifferent things or leaving

them aside, the indifferent things will join with the mandatory and recommended things as well as with leaving aside the forbidden and doubtful things. This is because of the mentioned intention, remembrance, presence, and negation of the soul's thought of partaking of its enjoyment, appetite, and share.

At this point, the properties of distinction between the servant and his Lord become few and there becomes manifest the correspondence between him and the divine love, whose root is "I loved to be recognized."³³ For, the specific property and trace of love is the negation of the properties of the distinction [*mumāyaza*] between the lover and the beloved so that love may bring about proximity between the two or unify them by negating from the lover the traces of the distinctions between the two.³⁴

Therefore "seeking the means of approach" is the same as gaining proximity through supererogatory works for the sake of being welcomed by God's love. Then all the properties of distinction may disappear through that welcome [*istiqbāl*]; it is what is meant by His words, "until I love him," right after His words, "The servant does not cease gaining proximity to Me through supererogatory works." This is because the elimination of some of the properties of the distinctions, such as the servant's entification and egoity, is not within the capacity of the servant unless God's love welcomes him and attracts him away from himself to Him. When all the distinguishing properties disappear through this welcome, the annihilation of the servant's acts is realized; then his attributes; then his egoity itself and the ascription of any act, attribute, or existence to him. This is what is meant by His words, *Everything is perishing but His face* [28:88] and His words, *Everything upon it is annihilated* [55:26]. Then Existence itself, which is the face of the subsistent Real, will become manifest. It is meant by His words, *And there subsists the face of thy Lord, possessor of majesty* through His inward and nondelimitation and *generous giving* [55:27] through His most beautiful names and the manifestation of their traces in the worlds.

At this point, it will become manifest that what was manifest from the lights of this Existence and Face in the form of the servant's hearing, eyesight, tongue, hand, and foot—while it was imagined, by virtue of delimitation by the levels and their veilness [*hijābiyya*] that it was ascribed to the servant while manifest in the attributes of his essence in respect of his createdness—was nothing but this very Face, Existence, and Light becoming manifest through him in the attribute of entification and delimitation and in the description of createdness. This is by the property of the levels, which are the loci of His manifestations, not through the property of His Essence and His essential requirement, for the levels have a property in that which becomes manifest within them, whether creature or Real.

But in this state, he was not aware of the property of the mentioned veilness. He supposed something that was not congruent with what was happening in actual

33. Allusion to the famous divine saying, "I was a Hidden Treasure, so I loved to be recognized . . ."

34. Compare this passage from *Muntahā* (2:264): "Know that love is an inner inclination toward one of the perfections. Its secret and reality is a tie between lover and beloved and a unifying and all-comprehending relation between them. Its trace is the elimination of the distinction between the two."

fact. So when the veilness disappears because of the negation of all the properties of distinction, what was fixed and manifest before that becomes manifest with the property of the nondelimitation of His radiance without delimitation by the levels. His supposition and its trace are negated in the midst of the negation of the properties of distinction. Its falseness appears when the Real, the Subsistent becomes manifest. For with this nondelimited, radiant manifestation, He does not become delimited by the property of any level whatsoever. Nothing appears to the recipient of self-disclosure but His nondelimitation and His lack of delimitation. This is why the taster of this tasting said, “I have seen nothing without seeing God before it.”³⁵ So understand!

This, then, is the meaning of what He said: “I am his hearing, his eyesight, his tongue, his hand, and his foot.” He did not say, “I become.” So know this! You will be guided, God willing.

Section. Know—may He confirm you!—that submission, faith, godwariness, and seeking the means of approach are all traces of the name *God* in respect of the fact that He is a guide. The prophets and messengers and possessors of resoluteness among them; those who have faith in God, in them, and in Gabriel inasmuch as he delivered the message and manifested the Shariah; or rather, everything whose relation to the side of necessity is more complete—all of these are loci of manifestation for the name *Guide* and those who make manifest its properties and traces. The revealed divine books speak on behalf of its properties. All mosques, congregational mosques, monasteries, retreat centers, madrasahs, and khanaqahs are the instruments for listening to its traces, namely, remembrance, glorification, and reciting *tawhīd* in the differentiated macrocosm.

The serene soul whose godwariness is inspired; the heart, which is the inward of the combinational guise named a soul that is *inspired in its depravity and godwariness* [91:8] and which is latent within [the soul] just as fire is latent in stone and iron, and just as blackness is latent in gall nuts and vitriol; and the intellect illumined by the light of the Shariah and named “kernel” because of this illumination—all these are also loci of manifestation for the name *Guide*. Sound inspirations and all-merciful and spiritual thoughts³⁶ all speak on behalf of its properties and its invitation inside the undifferentiated, human microcosm.

As for unbelief, rebellion, disobedience, being engrossed in the gratification of pleasures and appetites, undertaking forbidden and doubtful things, forgetfulness, and heedlessness of remembering God and of reflecting on His blessings and benefits—all are traces of the name *God*, but in respect of the attribute of His misguidance and His name the *Misguider*. The satans of jinn and men, the unbelievers, the disobedient, the rebellious, the leaders of unbelief—all are loci of manifestation for the name *Misguider* and those who make manifest its properties and traces. All forms of singing and instruments of diversion and song are among the instruments

35. Ibn al-ʿArabī ascribes this saying to Abū Bakr (see “Chittick, “*Tahrīr al-bayān*,” 12, note 17).

36. Thoughts (*khawāṭir*) are commonly divided into four sorts: all-merciful (*raḥmānī*), spiritual (*rūḥānī*), soulish (*naḥsānī*), and satanic (*shayṭānī*). As indicated here, the two higher sorts come from the side of the Guide, the two lower from the side of the Misguider.

of making manifest its invitation; and all forms of vintners and taverns are loci of witnessing the traces of accepting its invitation in the differentiated macrocosm.

So also the commanding soul, caprice [*hawā*], the intellect of this world's livelihood [*al-ʿaql al-maʿīshī al-dunyawī*], and sense-intuition [*wahm*] inasmuch as it follows corrupt imaginings; or rather, everything whose relation to the side of possibility [*imkān*] is more complete—all are loci of manifestation for the name *Misquider* and those who make manifest its properties and traces. All intrusions [*hujūmāt*] by the soul's talk, soulish and satanic fancies [*hawājis*], the accumulation of thoughts and reflections connected with being [*al-kawn*] and distracting from remembrance and from sound, beneficial reflection and immersion in and occupation with them; and the voyager's domination by heedlessness instead of what is most important for his moment and state—all these are among the properties of the manifestation of the traces of the name *Misquider* in the human microcosm.

Between these two names—I mean *Guide* and *Misquider*—there are requitals [*mujāzāt*], contentions [*mughālabāt*], and contrapositions [*muqālabāt*] in manifesting their properties and traces. Each desires to manifest its requirements so that the perfection specific to it will be connected to the manifestation of its specific requirements, properties, and traces. So wherever the properties of the name *Guide* become manifest and it dominates through the manifestation of its traces and requirements—namely, faith, submission, godwariness, and seeking the means of approach in respect of its loci of manifestation and those who make manifest its properties and traces, such as the faithful, the wholesome, the prophets, the messengers, and the wayfarers on the road of the Real—then inescapably the name *Misquider* will stand forth in respect of its loci of manifestation and those who make manifest its properties and traces—such as the satans of men of jinn, the unbelievers, their leaders, and their headmen—to repel and prevent the manifestation of the traces and requirements of the name *Guide* and the manifestation of the domination of its ruling authority.

Hence the small and the great struggle [*jihād*] will become established against Satan and his assistants, helpers, and party, namely, the unbelievers and their leaders, to remove their evil and break their appetite; and against the soul and caprice and their helpers, namely, appetite, wrath, and the potencies that follow them in the differentiated macrocosm and the human microcosm. This is why God placed the mention of the command to struggle immediately after the mention of the command to godwariness and seeking the means of approach. So know this!

As for the secret of the fact that the struggle against the soul, Satan, and their helpers in the human microcosm is the “greater struggle,” as he said—God bless him and give him peace!—“We have returned from the smaller struggle to the greater struggle” when he occupied himself with the ritual prayer after his return from the struggle against the unbelievers, this is because the final goal of giving existence to creation is only the Real's recognition of His all-comprehensive perfections, as He said, “I loved to be recognized, so I created creation that I might be recognized.”

This goal will not be realized completely without struggle in the human microcosm and without the domination by spirit and heart—through presence, remembrance, reflection, witnessing, and sound and unitary attentiveness toward the Real—over the commanding soul, Satan, and their assistants and helpers. The struggle in the differentiated macrocosm is a means and an intermediary to that objective.

This objective will not be reached without pure and sincere worship of God. There can be no performance of worship without repelling outward obstacles. These obstacles are the aim of the enemies of the religion, namely, that they oppose and prevent the manifestation of the rites of the Shariahs [*sha‘ā’ir al-sharā’i‘*]³⁷ and having faith and submitting, and they are antagonistic to that and fight against it. So the struggle against the soul in the human world is sought and intended for itself, but the struggle in the differentiated world is a means and an instrument, sought for the sake of other than itself. Something that is intended and sought for the sake of itself is greater and higher than something that has the rank of a means and an instrument and is being sought for the sake of other than itself.

So the struggle in God’s road includes the two struggles, the smaller and the greater. *Struggle in God with the rightful due of His struggle* [22:78] is specific to the greater struggle, which is the struggle against the soul by holding it back from its shares in all the levels, stations, states, character traits, and knowledges; by turning it away from gratifying every one of its shares, pleasures, and desires; by severing its expectations and wishes and by severing its gaze from awareness [*taṭallu‘*] of any part in the acts of heart and body; by blocking the gate of seeing anything of this ascribed to itself and thereby uprooting its hardships by stealing hidden shares of what is bestowed upon the heart, the spirit, and the secret core—namely, the gifts of self-disclosures, knowledges, unveilings, contemplations, and so on.

Struggle is also against the properties of the createdness [*khalqiyya*] of the spiritual spirit when it becomes manifest in the property of the sensory configuration. So also it is against the properties of the delimitation of the secret core by entification when the property of the mortal configuration becomes manifest, that which is meant by His words, *Surely I am but a mortal like you* [18:110]. Striving and effort are to prevent the domination of these properties over it and to repel their manifestation, except in the measure that is necessary.

37. Like Ibn al-‘Arabī, Farghānī uses the plural of Shariah in a broad sense to designate all the religions brought by the prophets (see, for example, *Muntahā*, 1:110). In the singular, he often contrasts the word with Tariqah and Haqiqah.

As for the secret of using the formula of hopefulness in attaining the causes of triumph and success by gaining the sought object—which is becoming adorned with the adornment of proximity and eradicating the reality of love³⁸—this is an allusion to the fact that all causes are preparations; they do not leave traces. That which leaves traces is the Real through His power over the causes. This is because the act of the actor does not become manifest until after gaining complete receptivity and preparedness to receive the act. Gaining complete receptivity and the preparedness to receive the manifestation of the Real's act in respect of His power is something hidden from the servant because of the plausibility that some hidden precondition of complete causation remains.

Gaining complete preparedness through the formula of hopefulness goes back to gaining complete receptivity and the preparedness to receive the acts of prosperity and success and the gift of the sought object and goal. It is as if He is saying, "Attain and acquire the preparedness to receive the act of My proximity within you by means of godwariness, seeking the means of approach, and struggle in My path. Perhaps you will completely gain preparedness and receptivity and all of their preconditions. Then your prosperity and your triumph through proximity to the manifestation of the act of My proximity within you will follow upon that." Everything that comes in the Exalted Book with a formula of hopefulness goes back to this meaning. So know this. *And God speaks the truth, and He guides on the road* [33:4].

The book is complete, and with God is protection and success in what is correct.

38. By "eradicating" (*istīṣāl*) love's reality, Farghānī seems to mean overcoming the lover-beloved duality, as indicated toward the end of the previous section (see note 34).

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